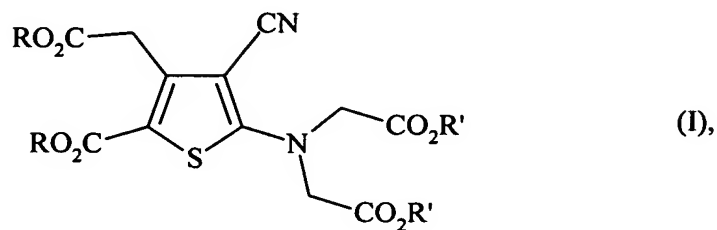


## LISTING OF CLAIMS

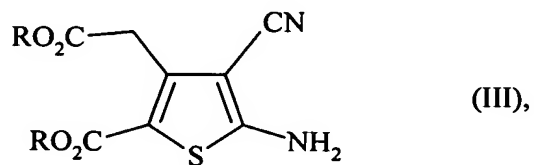
Claims 1 -14 (canceled)

15. (new) A process for the industrial synthesis of a compound of formula (I) :



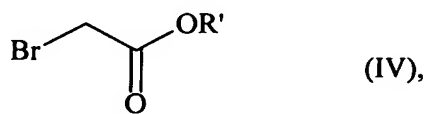
wherein R and R', which are the same or different, each represent linear or branched (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>)alkyl,

5 wherein a compound of formula (III) :



wherein R is as defined hereinbefore,

is reacted with a compound of formula (IV) :



10 wherein R' is as defined hereinbefore,

in the presence of a catalytic amount of a C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-type quaternary ammonium compound,  
 and in the presence of potassium carbonate,  
 at reflux with an organic solvent;  
 5 the reaction mixture is subsequently filtered;  
 the mixture is then concentrated by distillation;  
 a co-solvent is then added,  
 and the reaction mixture is cooled and filtered  
 to yield, after drying of the powder thereby obtained, the compound of formula (I),

10 it being understood that a C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-type quaternary ammonium compound is a compound of formula (A) or a mixture of compounds of formula (A) :



wherein R<sub>1</sub> represents (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>)alkyl, R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> and R<sub>4</sub>, which are identical or different, each represent (C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>)alkyl, and X represents halogen.

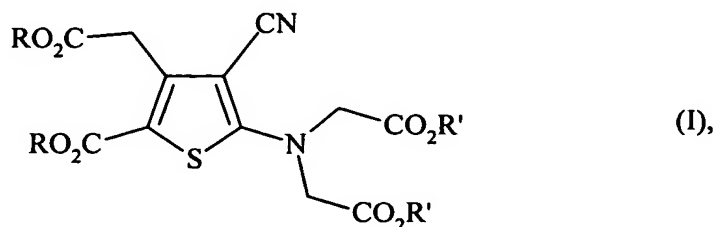
15 16. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15 allowing the compound of formula (I), wherein R represents a methyl group and R' represents an ethyl group, to be obtained.

17. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15 allowing the compound of formula (I), wherein R and R' each represent a methyl group, to be obtained.

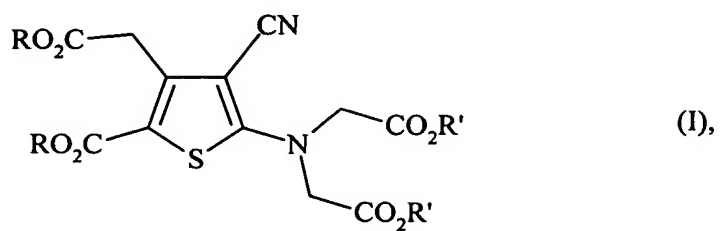
20 18. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the C<sub>8</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>-type quaternary ammonium compound is a mixture of methyl trioctylammonium chloride, of methyl trinonylammonium chloride and of methyl tridecylammonium chloride or a mixture of methyl tri-n-octylammonium chloride and methyl tridecylammonium chloride with methyl tri-n-octylammonium chloride predominating.

25 19. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the amount of potassium carbonate is from 2 to 3 mol per mol of compound of formula (III).

20. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the amount of compound of formula (IV) is from 2 to 3 mol per mol of compound of formula (III).
21. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the initial volume of organic solvent is from 6 to 12 ml per gram of compound of formula (III).
- 5 22. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the organic solvent used for the reaction is acetone or acetonitrile.
23. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the co-solvent used during isolation is methanol.
- 10 24. (new) The synthesis process of claim 15, wherein the compound of formula (I) obtained has a chemical purity greater than 98 %.
25. (new) The compound which is Methyl 5-[bis(2-methoxy-2-oxoethyl)amino]-4-cyano-3-(2-methoxy-2-oxoethyl)-2-thiophenecarboxylate.
26. (new) The compound which is Methyl 5-[bis(2-ethoxy-2-oxoethyl)amino]-4-cyano-3-(2-methoxy-2-oxoethyl)-2-thiophenecarboxylate.
- 15 27. (new) The process for the synthesis of ranelic acid, its strontium, calcium or magnesium salts and hydrates of the said salts, starting from a compound of formula (I) :



28. (new) The process for the synthesis of strontium ranelate and its hydrates, starting from a compound of formula (I) :



5 wherein R and R', which are the same or different, each represent linear or branched (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>)alkyl,

wherein the compound of formula (I) is obtained by the synthesis process of claim 15.